

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the above-identified application.

Listing of Claims

1. **(Currently Amended)** A method comprising:
transmitting a first data stream to a switch fabric, said first data stream having a first priority; and
at any time during said transmission, interrupting said transmission of said first data stream to transmit a second data stream to said switch fabric, said second data stream having a second priority;
interrupting said transmission of said second data stream to resume transmission of said first data stream to the switching fabric.
2. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 1, further comprising:
resuming transmission of said first data stream ~~if there is no data of said second data stream to transmit~~ even though there is data of the second data stream to transmit to the switching fabric.
3. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 1, further comprising:
stopping said transmission of said first data stream;
transmitting a first switch code; and
transmitting said second data stream.
4. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 3, further comprising:
transmitting a second switch code; and
resuming transmission of said first data stream.
5. **(Original)** The method of claim 1, wherein
said first priority is a low priority; and
said second priority is a high priority.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising :
stopping transmission of a frame of said first data stream after detection of a start
of frame and prior to detection of an end of frame.
7. (Cancelled)
8. (Cancelled)
9. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
storing data of said first data stream in a first FIFO; and
storing data of said second data stream in a second FIFO.
10. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 9, wherein said interrupting of
transmission of the first data stream comprises:
upon detection of data in said second FIFO, interrupting said first data stream.
11. (Original) The method of claim 9, further comprising:
receiving a data stream at a line card, said data stream comprising frames of said
first data stream and frames of said second data stream; and
detecting the priority of said frames of said data stream.
12. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, ~~further comprising: at periodic
intervals during transmission of said second data stream, transmitting an~~ wherein
transmission of the second data stream is interrupted to transmit a predetermined
amount of bytes of data of said first data stream.

13. **(Currently Amended)** An apparatus comprising:
a first buffer configured to store data of a first data stream prior to transmission to a switching fabric, said data of said first data stream having a first priority;
a second buffer configured to store data of a second data stream prior to transmission to the switching fabric, said data of said second data stream having a second priority;
a priority switch circuit coupled to said first buffer and said second buffer,
wherein said priority switch circuit is configured to upon detection of data of said second data stream, interrupt a transmission of data of said first data stream from the first buffer at any time during said transmission and transmit data of said second data stream from the second buffer, and
wherein said priority switch circuit is further configured to interrupt said transmission of said second data stream from the second buffer to resume transmission of said first data stream from the first buffer.
14. **(Currently Amended)** The apparatus of claim 13, wherein said priority switch circuit is ~~further~~ configured to resume transmission of said first data stream ~~if there is no data of said second data stream to transmit~~ even though the second buffer contains data of the second data stream to be transmitted.
15. **(Currently Amended)** The apparatus of claim 14, wherein said priority switch circuit is further configured to transmit a first switch code after the second buffer has transmitted data of said second data stream and prior to resuming the transmission of data of said first data stream.
16. **(Currently Amended)** The apparatus of claim 13, wherein said priority switch circuit is configured to transmit a second switch code upon detection of data of said second data stream in the second buffer.

17. (Original) The apparatus of claim 13 wherein said priority switch circuit is further configured to interrupt transmission of said first data stream during transmission of a packet of said first data stream from said first buffer.

18. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 13 wherein said priority switch circuit is further configured to transmit ~~an~~ a predetermined amount of bytes from said first buffer when the priority switch circuit resumes transmission of the first data stream ~~data stream at periodic intervals during transmission of said second data stream from said second buffer.~~

19. (Original) The apparatus of claim 13 further comprising:
a port coupleable to a network device; and
a forwarding engine coupled between said port and each of said first and second buffers, said forwarding engine configured to forward frames of said first data stream to said first buffer and forward second frames of said second data stream to said second buffer.

20. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 13 further comprising:
a serial link configured to serialize data received from said first and said second buffers and said priority switch circuit and transmit said serialized data to ~~[[a]]~~ the switching fabric.

21. (Cancelled)

22. (Cancelled)

23. **(Currently Amended)** An apparatus comprising:
a first buffer configured to store data of a first data stream prior to transmission to a switching fabric, said data of said first data stream having a first priority;
a second buffer configured to store data of a second data stream prior to transmission to the switching fabric, said data of said second data stream having a second priority; and
means for, upon detection of data in said second buffer, interrupting a transmission of said first data stream from the first buffer at any time and transmitting said second data stream to ~~[[a]]~~ the switch fabric from the second buffer;
means for resuming transmission of said first data stream when there is data in the second buffer to transmit.
24. **(Cancelled)**
25. **(Cancelled)**
26. **(Cancelled)**
27. **(Cancelled)**
28. **(Cancelled)**